

**SHELTER HARBOR FIRE DISTRICT
ANNUAL MEETING DRAFT MINUTES**

9:00 A.M., Saturday, August 9, 2014

St. Andrew Lutheran Church

East Beach Road

Charlestown, RI

I. Call to Order

Tom Lloyd called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m. and thanked everyone for coming.

Clerk's Note: A quorum of SHFD residents was present.

Board members present were John Bruno, Mary Harrop, Jack Waters, Vivian Duff, Bob Hatfield, Michael McEntee, and Moderator, Tom Lloyd. Also present were Glen Berwick, Treasurer; Harry Gregory, Tax Assessor and Collector; Nonie Price, Clerk; and Peter Ruggiero, Legal Counsel.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Moderator's Comments

Tom Lloyd commented on the Fire Protection Contract. The initial contract with Dunn's Corners Fire Department was signed in 2009 for a five-year term ending in 2014. The SHFD will be able to have an

extension on the Fire Protection Contract this year under the evergreen clause. There were several SHFD internal meetings with Mark Pratt, Glen Berwick, Bob Hatfield, and John Bruno to discuss the issue. Additionally, the Moderator and others met with representatives in Shady Harbor, as well as attending several Dunn's Corners Fire District meetings. Without the contract, and if SHFD had to pay for fire protection based upon the current DCFD mil rate of 0.42 to 0.45 cents this year, SHFD would be paying between \$73,797 to \$79,068, versus the \$57,530 the District is budgeting for fire protection.

Tom advised that he was quoted in a long Letter to the Editor appearing in The Westerly Sun.

He suggested that the letter contained many inaccuracies and wanted to set the record straight by mentioning some facts. Tom recited the following facts: there are seven fire districts in Westerly, 39 cities and towns in the State of Rhode Island, 42 fire districts, and the Shelter Harbor Fire District does pay real estate taxes to the Town of Westerly.

There are two new pieces of legislation the SHFD has to deal with. The first is the Fiscal Stability Act. This piece of legislation was enacted to provide for the financial stability of cities and towns in Rhode Island. In this legislation, fire districts were added to the existing city and town financial reporting legislation. The 39 cities, towns, and 42 fire districts would have to submit annual financial

statements, an adopted budget survey, demonstrate monitoring of financial operations, provide quarterly reports, have a certification of the tax roll, and submit to a GAAP Audit. The Rhode Island Department of Revenue which oversees the reporting, has decided that for fire districts, there will be three tiers of reporting. SHFD will fit into the lower tier and reporting requirements will be minimal. However, in anticipation of needing to comply with this legislation, \$5,000 was budgeted for this purpose. As a result of having a lower level of reporting requirements, the SHFD will be able to propose removing \$5,000 from the budget later in the meeting.

The second piece of legislation with which the SHFD must comply, is the Rhode Island Public Employee Tax Compliance Act. This Act requires every fire district to report income of employees to the state. The purpose of the Act is to make sure people who are earning income in Rhode Island are submitting tax returns.

There has been a lot of tree trimming in SH. Many private owners have trimmed trees and bushes, particularly along parts of Wagner and along other roads, too. The Town of Westerly has done trimming along its roads in SH. The SHFD has done trimming on its roads.

There is interest within the community to preserve land in Shelter Harbor. The Moderator urged residents to support the Shelter Harbor Conservation Society.

John Bruno will be asked to comment on Harbor Management later in the meeting.

Mike Van Vranken will be asked to comment on the Shelter Harbor Conservation Society and efforts to dredge the pond later in the meeting.

Because of speeding in Shelter Harbor, Alex Platt has had speed monitors placed in the community several times over the summer. Residents are asked to keep their car speed down.

Dog walkers in SH are asked to make sure they take any dog “packages” home with them.

There is a legislative requirement that residents replace cesspools and in certain cases to upgrade existing septic systems. Five SH homeowners have indicated that they need to upgrade and are being referred to a septic installer for a discount. If anyone needs to make this change, they may contact Tom Lloyd for more information.

There have been complaints about the cost of postage and mailing. Some items need to be mailed as per the By-Laws. Tom asked the residents in attendance to indicate by a show of hands whether they prefer snail mail versus email communication. The show of hands was fairly equal for each option.

The board members were asked to introduce themselves to the residents.

IV. Approval of the Minutes from the Annual Meeting, August 10, 2013

A motion was duly made by Mark Pratt and seconded by Mary Harrop to approve the Minutes from the Annual Meeting of August 10, 2013. There was no discussion. All present voted in favor and the Minutes were approved.

V. Appointment of Parliamentarian

Tom Lloyd appointed Joe Rucci as Parliamentarian for the 2014 Annual Meeting. Joe indicated he was willing to perform this role for the meeting.

VI. Announcements:

A. A Moment of Silence was held in Remembrance of Dr. Nicholas Christy; Robert Iorio; Tom Smith; and Harry Staley.

B. Introduction of New Residents:

The following new residents' names were read and were asked to stand, if present.

Andrew and Allison Harper, 34 and 36 Haydn Road; Jack and Judy Morgan, 12 Bach Road; Juan Carlos and Gigi Porcelli, 27 Wagner Road and 8 Gounod Road; Eugene and Kathleen Ragone, 36 Haydn Road; Dr. Alyson Silverberg and Michelle Malanga, 71 Wagner Road;

and Jason and Karen Osborn, 83 Wagner Road.

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The Moderator thanked the new residents who came to join the meeting.

C. Liz Miller was thanked for producing the 2014 Directory.

D. Bob Duff was thanked for updating and managing the SHFD website.

E. Mary Harrop was thanked for assembling the community functions flyers. Liz Miller was thanked for helping prepare the flyers for mailing.

F. Bob and Heidi Palumbo were thanked for running the logo wear.

G. Jack Hardick was thanked for conducting the annual audit of the SHFD finances.

H. Phyllis Visnauskas and Brenda Manning were thanked for the well-attended and highly successful SHFD Ladies' Luncheon.

I. Mary Harrop, Helene Hardick, and several other volunteers were thanked for planning the 4th of July Weekend Activities.

- J. The Staley family was thanked for use of the Landing for the 4th of July activities.**
- K. Karen Matheson was thanked for coordinating Dinner for 8.**
- L. Mary and Bruno DiCecco were thanked for the summer tennis tournaments.**
- M. Bev Howland was thanked for running the Book Swap.**
- N. Helene Hardick was thanked for organizing the Adult Cocktail Party.**
- O. John Bruno was thanked for the Westerly Band Concert.**
- P. Mary Hardy was thanked for organizing the “Pond Paddle” even though the weather cancelled the event.**
- Q. Carl and Val Blume were thanked for organizing the Social Hour after the Annual Meeting.**
- R. John and Dorothy Bruno and their team were thanked for their work to have the Annual Beach Party.**
- S. Mark Kane was thanked for organizing and running the Shelter Harbor Kids Fishing Tournament.**

Additionally, Tom Lloyd thanked Rochelle Levins for organizing the Harborlicious events at Harbor Field.

From the floor, additional thanks were given to Harriet Lloyd for organizing the Art Show in July at Staley's Landing.

Carl Blume thanked the Moderator and the BoG for their efforts.

Tom Lloyd asked for a motion to change the sequence of agenda items so reports could be presented in the following order: Treasurer's Report, Auditor's Report, the Tax Collector's Report, and Finance Committee Report.

Parliamentarian, Joe Rucci stated the moderator had the authority to make the change without a motion.

VII. Report of the Treasurer

Glen Berwick stated that his full report is contained in the packet mailed to residents for the Annual Meeting. He shared the Shelter Harbor funds are on an account basis. There are four funds. The Capital Fund which has \$73,000 in cash. The Litigation Fund which has \$44,000 in cash. The Logo Wear Fund has \$1,300, in cash. And, there is the Undesignated Surplus account having \$30,000, most of which is in cash. Glen added there was a surplus of \$6,300 on the Income Statement thanks to the various SH groups not spending all

of their budgets.

Glen asked if there were any questions of the report.

Dick Ferris asked if the Litigation Fund is for litigating border disputes.

Mark Pratt stated that the Litigation Fund can be used for litigating and being proactive and that there are no categories for litigation stipulated for the fund. He further stated that any litigation the community wants to pursue is what the fund is to be used for.

Dick Ferris asked if the Minutes could be looked up to see if the fund has litigation stipulations.

The Moderator agreed to a review of the Minutes from the meeting where the Litigation Fund was established and thanked Glen for the report.

Gail Mallard duly made a motion to accept the Report of the Treasurer. Joe Rucci seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All present voted in favor. The motion carried.

VIII. Report of the Auditor.

Jack Hardick stated he had inspected the financial statements and records of the Shelter Harbor Fire District for the fiscal year ending

June 30, 2014. In his opinion, the statements fairly present the financial position of the District at that date and the results of the operations for the fiscal year ending.

Jack read the rest of his report to the audience present.

There were no questions about the audit.

John Bruno duly made a motion to accept the Report of the Auditor. Vivian Duff seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All present voted in favor and the motion carried.

Tom Lloyd thanked Jack for his work to conduct the audit.

IX. Report of the Tax Collector

Harry Gregory shared his report. For the fiscal year, tax revenue was \$205,165.83. There are still some outstanding tax receipts due. The process of tax collection and sale is in process for the outstanding tax receipts due to the SHFD.

Harry further stated the proposed budget for the current fiscal year of June 2015 would be \$219,107.00. However, based on Tom Lloyd's remarks earlier in the meeting, there may be a reduction to the budget presented to residents in the Annual Meeting mailing. Mark Pratt will address this in his report.

If the Report of the Tax Collector is accepted, residents are agreeing to allow the collection of taxes to fund the budget.

The \$219,107.00 budget could be reduced to \$214, 363.00.

The process of a tax sale was explained.

Tom Lloyd thanked Harry for his work. A motion was duly made by Jack Waters to accept the Report of the Tax Collector. The motion was seconded by Mary Harrop. There was no discussion. All present voted in favor and the motion carried.

X. Finance Committee Report

Mark Pratt reported that \$5,000 was put in the budget for audit and reporting requirements. The \$214,363.00 that will be recommended later in the meeting is a 4.5 percent increase. The increase is driven by beach expenses being up 7.7 percent. The cost for Dunn's Corners Fire protection has increased 7 percent year on year.

There will be a \$5,000 addition to the Litigation Fund. \$20,000 will be put into the Capital Reserve. This is basically to do the roads every ten years. The purpose of the Capital Reserve is to even out expenses year to year so there is no dramatic increase in a single year.

Approving the budget of \$214,363.00 will result in a mil rate of \$1.22 per \$1,000 of assessed value. When the budget is approved, it means

residents are accepting the tax collection to fund it.

A question was asked about the beach budget. Bob Hatfield explained the budget increased due to salaries. This year there was a dollar per hour increase to keep experienced staff.

Mark Pratt explained the Finance Committee is going to work with the Beach Committee to see how to limit increases.

The Grand List increased by 0.6 percent. Harry Gregory explained he receives a Grand List from the Town of Westerly each year.

Tom Lloyd explained that some towns in Rhode Island have reduced Grand Lists, so it is remarkable that Shelter Harbor has not experienced a reduction.

Vivian Duff duly moved to accept the Report of the Finance Committee. John Bruno seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The Report of the Finance Committee was accepted.

Tom Lloyd commented that when Mark rolled off the BoG last year, he agreed to stay on as the Finance Committee Chair and work to address the fire protection issue. Mark was thanked for his time.

XI. Comments on Reports of Committees and Agents

A. Beach

Bob Hatfield stated we were 70 percent through the season and everything has been running smoothly. He thanked the members of the Beach Committee; Mary Hardy, Jim Levins, Rochelle Levins, Marie McEntee, and Betty Waters. Special thanks were extended to Jim Levins for his additional work helping the Beach Committee.

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Repairs on the mat will be done before the beach party. There has been less overcrowding in the parking lot this year. If there is any overcrowding, residents are asked to contact Bob Hatfield. Anyone who would like to join the Beach Committee is asked to contact him.

Aaron Perkins is the lifeguard supervisor, who couldn't be at the meeting. Bob read Aaron's report highlighting the following details. Brian Kelly, a lifeguard from Mystic, and Serenity Schilke, the beach lot attendant, were hired this season. Aaron is doing hands-on training beyond what is required by the state. Season statistics: 11 First Aids, 4 assists out of water, 1 miscellaneous incident, 0 security issues, 0 EMS calls.

A significant addition this year is that Grove Dock has a 911 address - 48 Rossini Road. Now the lifeguards have access to a landline phone to make emergency calls.

It is requested that residents not sit in front of the lifeguard chair to allow the lifeguard clear access to the water. Residents are also requested to stay off the dunes. Bicycle use is encouraged, but

please don't park in walkway. No games or skim boards are allowed in the swim area.

A portable radio has been given to the parking lot attendant to address any security issues.

Tom Lloyd asked the attendees to thank Bob Hatfield for his work on the Beach Committee and for Aaron Perkins as lifeguard supervisor. A round of applause was given to Bob and Aaron for their work with the beach.

B. Beanpot Gardens

Karen Matheson stated that she usually asks for help with the weeding of the gardens. However, attendees were warned about a poison ivy vine by the hydrangeas, and Karen requested residents not weed in that one area.

Karen added she's been working to help keep the bulletin board area neater. She asked residents to put flyers inside the bulletin board under the plexiglass and to remove them after the event is over.

C. Bylaws

Joe Rucci stated the last Bylaw review was in 2008 and was conducted with Harry Staley. Joe reviewed the SHFD Bylaws to see if a tune up was needed. He met with members of the BoG. A few changes have been looked at about

opting in and out of email communication.

D. Community Functions

Mary Harrop stated that SH is a wonderful community and so many people in the room have made it so. She asked those who have helped to pat themselves on the back. She said that she thinks of these people as memory makers. The 4th of July parade had more people marching than watching - which was wonderful! She thanked everyone and asked if anyone wants to be a memory maker to let her know. Mark Kane has a kids' fishing tournament, and it will happen again this year, but anyone should feel free to come watch, and maybe fish, too.

E. Database

Nonie Price shared the database has been updated from the information provided from residents through the Directory update. Residents are encouraged to update their address and email account changes as they are made through the year. Residents can contact her at shelterharborfiredistrict@gmail.com.

F. Directory

Liz Miller said she is able to make additions and changes once a month to the Directory that appears on the website. She asked residents to email her any changes.

Clerk's Note: Residents may contact Liz Miller or Nonie Price with

changes to email addresses, or physical addresses. We share the information with each other, so contacting both of us is not necessary.

G. Harbor Master and Assistant for Dinghies and Moorings, Boat Racks

John Bruno stated Shelter Harbor had a good winter and repairs were less than 100 dollars. Jim Levins and his grandson were thanked for the new bench. Rick Wiatrowski and sons were thanked for helping to put up the swim buoys at Grove Dock.

An issue that has arisen is for renters. Renters should make sure a tag is used when parking at Grove and Point Docks.

John thanked Karen Matheson for maintaining the roses and keeping them looking so well.

The combination for the lock at Point Dock will change sometime following the Annual Meeting to 3474 (fish).

The Harbor Management Commission submitted paperwork to CRMC in June 2013. They haven't had a meeting since December 2013. A remaining issue is public access. The final document has not been presented for approval by the Town of Westerly.

Dick Ferris asked about public access and noted there is public access on Winnapaug Pond. Dick asked if the SHFD would contemplate suggesting that the Town of Westerly look to develop and use its own properties for public access.

Bob Hatfield discussed boat racks. At the end of the season, at Grove or Point Docks, residents should remove their dinghies and boats to prevent damage to the boat racks.

H. Finance

This report was delivered earlier in the meeting. See above.

I. Long Range Planning

No report.

J. Roads

Jack Waters stated the Town of Westerly did a good job with the tree trimming last fall and this spring. The severe winter resulted in some severe pot holes that required patching which hadn't been done since around 2010.

Cheryl Ferris asked about the "No Parking" sign by Grove Dock. Jack replied that Rick Perry was asked to plant it, which he did, but the sign was removed again.

K. Safety and Security

Alex Platt's report is in the packet mailed to residents.

Comments regarding speeding were made by the Moderator at the beginning of the meeting.

L. Tennis

Mary DiCecco stated the Fourth of July tournament was successful with a terrific audience. Don Fair is doing a great job with tennis lessons. A broom was found for grooming the courts for less than 20 dollars. Residents were thanked for keeping the courts clean and the gates locked when players leave. Glen Berwick is working on the fence repairs that will need to be made. She thanked everyone. She also noted the combination for the lock at the courts is 7482 (shtc).

M. Website

Bob Duff stated a new website is in development. The new site can be updated on a daily basis. An email will be sent to current members to explain the new website access. Hopefully this will be done by next week. The website address is shelterharbor.org. If anyone is new to the community, they can look on the website, click the login, select a password, and access rights will be granted. Bob can be reached at duffr@yahoo.com. The old website will not allow for easily migrating current users, so selecting a new password will be necessary.

XII. Actions Required of the Meeting

A. Approval of the Budget F/Y 2014-2015

The Finance Committee recommended a budget of \$219,107.00 as

presented to residents in the Annual Meeting mailing. Mark Pratt duly made a motion to move the budget as submitted. The motion was seconded by Vivian Duff. There was no discussion. Mark was asked to amend the motion on the floor to an amount of \$214,363.00. The amended motion was seconded by John Bruno. There was no discussion for the amended motion. All present voted in favor of the amended motion and the budget carried.

1. Resolution to Assess and Collect Taxes

Harry Gregory read the resolution to residents present. The budget approved of \$214,363.00 requires a tax rate of \$1.22 per \$1000 of assessed value.

Vivian Duff duly moved to approve the Resolution to Assess and Collect Taxes. Jack Waters seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The Resolution was approved.

B. Election of Officers F/Y 2014-2015

- 1. Moderator – Tom Lloyd (incumbent)**
- 2. Treasurer – Glen Berwick (incumbent)**
- 3. Tax Collector/Assessor – Harry Gregory (incumbent)**
- 4. Clerk – Nonie Price (incumbent)**

Tom Lloyd stated four offices have to be filled. All candidates are running unopposed. Tom Lloyd asked for a motion to elect the unopposed candidates to the offices for which they are running. Bob

Hatfield duly made this motion that was seconded by Joe Rucci. There was no discussion. All present voiced approval of the slate presented. All the candidates were elected.

C. Elections of Members of the Board of Governors (two positions)

Tom Lloyd explained that Mary Harrop and Jack Waters are leaving the BoG. Jack has served two consecutive three-year terms. Jack also served on the BoG previously. He has also done work with the roads for many years. Mary Harrop has served two consecutive three-year terms as well as also doing all of her work with the SH community functions. The two BoG members were thanked very much for their efforts. Tom Lloyd added that it has been wonderful having both on the BoG for the past service and for their continued work with the roads and community functions. Both were asked to say a few words to those gathered for the Annual Meeting.

Mary spoke to residents explaining how much goes into being a BoG member. She emphasized that the time, effort, and thought put into the job of being a BoG member is to make sure a decision is being honestly made for the best interest of SH. She said that as much time a BoG member puts into their role, that the Moderator puts in more than anyone, and she asked for a round of applause for Tom Lloyd.

Jack stated he was on the BoG for six years and totally enjoyed it. He continued that for the past two years he has served as Vice Moderator and in this role he saw how

involved the Moderator's role is and how much goes into the job. Jack complimented Tom Lloyd on being a leader in dealing with issues around the fire contract issues to get a one year exemption. Another example of leadership was when Tom organized local fire districts going to the state to explain that the SHFD is small and shouldn't be part of the new regulations.

Mary Harrop and Jack Waters both received rounds of applause from those gathered.

Tom Lloyd stated that it is tradition to elect people to the spots open on the BoG. Two people are running unopposed and the two new people should come join the BoG as the leaving members depart. Marianne Nardone and Rick Wiatrowski were asked to stand. Tom explained Marianne is a full-time resident and has been involved in many efforts in the community. Her professional activity was with the Norwich, CT school system. Rick Wiatrowski and his family are seasonal residents on Handel Road and have been active in the community. His business experience and time on the beach with his kids will serve the community well.

A motion to elect Marianne Nardone and Rick Wiatrowski to the SHFD BoG was duly made by Joe Picano. The motion was seconded by Allen Leadbetter. There was no further comment. All present voted in favor.

XIII. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

XIV. New Business

There was no New Business.

XV. Public Comment

H.C. Osborn asked about the increase cost of fire protection. Mark Pratt answered that the cap is 7 percent. Every year under the contract has been a 7 percent increase.

H.C.Osborn asked what roads in SH are town roads. Tom Lloyd answered that Wagner Road, Rossini Road, and part of Verdi Road, are Town of Westerly roads.

Louise Thorson asked if there could be an opt-out option of snail mail versus email. Tom Lloyd responded the SHFD will figure out what delivery system could work.

Mary Harrop stated the flyers were mailed this year and this was a first. She asked for a show of hands to see if people used the flyers. By the show of hands, about half of the residents present indicated they used the flyers. Suggested changes were to have flyers posted on the website and/or include a one sheet listing of events instead of individual sheets for each event. The BoG will consider different options.

Dick Ferris asked about the parking lot attendant's use of a cell phone. Bob Hatfield stated the attendant has a radio to contact WFD security.

Mike Van Vranken spoke on behalf of the Shelter Harbor Conservation Society. Mark Kane, on the SHCS board, runs the email blasts. The SHCS Annual Meeting was held last week and the biggest issues were the pond and the shore. The SHCS worked with other groups to address dredging. Through the Weekapaug Foundation for Conservation, a grant was awarded. There is a public move to help. The three fire districts, and Nopes Island met to organize and the dredging is on the schedule. The grant will get everything ready for when the state approves the work. Mike added that addressing the dunes is another issue being worked on by the SHCS with Weekapaug Foundation for Conservation. The SH trails have been cleared with a grant from the Shermans. SHCS has children's events. He encouraged SH residents to become members. Membership forms are available.

John Bruno announced the beach party is next Saturday. The van will run late. There will be parking available in the Shady Harbor lot after 5:00 p.m. Food service starts at 5:00 p.m.

A food drive for the Johnnycake Center is being held by Mikhayla Bruno. Mikhayla is doing this food drive for a school project. People are welcome to drop off donations at the Bruno home.

XVI. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the 2014 Annual Meeting of the Shelter Harbor Fire District was duly made by Bob Hatfield. The motion was seconded by Vivian Duff. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

**Recorded by,
Nonie Price, Clerk**